

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 603

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 7628

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, OEXC, NI

SUBJ: ULC REFUSES TO JOIN NLC, WRITES TO GEORGE

MEANY CRITICIZING FORMER LABATT, WANTS

INVITATIONS TO AFL-CIO CONVENTION

REF : LAGOS 4842 AND PREVIOUS

1. RESISTANCE OF UNITED LABOR CONGRESS (ULC) TO FORMATION OF PROPOSED NIGERIAN LABOR CONGRESS (NLC) HAS NOW CRYSTALLIZED INTO DEFINITE REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE. THIS WAS CONFIRMED AUGUST 5 BY E.O. ODEYEMI, ACTING GENERAL SECRETARY OF ULC, IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY POLITICAL/LABOR ASSISTANT. ODEYEMI DECLARED ULC WILL REFUSE TO JOIN NLC BECAUSE THEY FEEL NEW ORGANIZATION WILL BE USED FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, REVEALED THAT HE HAD SENT LETTER OF SUSPENSION TO ONE OF HIS ASSISTANT SECRETARIES (AUGUSTINE AYO) WHO ADVOCATED IN DAILY TIMES OF AUGUST 2 THAT ULC GO AHEAD WITH MERGER.

2. ODEYEMI MADE CLEAR ULC'S DISPLEASURE (ALREADY WELL-KNOWN TO EMBASSY, SEE REFTTEL) WITH FORMER LABATT DON KNIGHT'S ADVOCACY OF MERGER, SAID THAT BEFORE KNIGHT'S DEPARTURE (JULY 1) ULC WROTE LETTER TO GEORGE MEANY CRITICIZING LABATT'S ACTIVITIES. HE CONFIRMED THAT ULC DISPLEASED WITH EMBASSY PRACTICE OF NOT GIVING ULC DECISIVE VOICE IN WHO USG SENDS TO US ON EDUCATIONAL TRIPS, SAID ULC WAS WORKING DISCREDIT THOSE WHO HAD BEEN SENT ABROAD WITHOUT THEIR BLESSING, E.G. GREGORY IGBO, FORMER FMG REGISTRAR OF TRADE UNIONS, WHO IS NOW RETIRED, AND

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A. H. ODUNGIDE, TRADE UNION ADVISER OF MINISTRY OF LABOR WHO

WILL FACE MUSIC WHEN HE RETURNS.

3. POLITICAL/LABOR ASSISTANT REPORTED THAT ODEYEMI HAD SAID HE AND ULC NATIONAL PRESIDENT ALHAJI YUNUSA KALTUNGO WOULD APPRECIATE EVIDENCE THAT USG NOT ARMTWISTING ULC ON ISSUE OF NLC. ODEYEMI SUGGESTED INVITATION TO SEPTEMBER AFL-CIO CONVENTION WOULD SERVE AS SUCH EVIDENCE; CLAIMED HE AND KALTUNGO REGULARLY RECEIVE INVITATIONS AND ARE WONDERING WHY THERE HAS BEEN DELAY THIS TIME.

COMMENT: WHILE EMBASSY RECOGNIZES THAT AFL-CIO MAY SEND INVITATIONS TO ODEYEMI AND KALTUUGO AS MATTER OF ROUTINE, AND WE WOULD NOT WANT TO STAND IN WAY, WE WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT ULC'S SHABBY TREATMENT FORMER LABATT AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN LABOR CENTER'S JOHN N. GOULD AND SUGGEST THAT AFL-CIO MAY WISH CHECK WITH AALC BEFORE ISSUING INVITATIONS.
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